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THE MUSICAL TIMES,

And Singing Class Circular.

MAY 1st, 1848.

NOTICE.

IN answer to several correspondents who have desired to obtain the back numbers of the *Musical Times*, with the notices of passing musical events, announcements of new works, &c., we have to inform them that it is only the music pages which are stereotyped, and of the temporary matter only sufficient copies are printed to meet the current sale. The only method, therefore, of insuring the complete work, is to order it to be supplied monthly by their local newsmen, periodical dealer, book, or musicseller. We recommend this method rather than that of sending the name to our office, and being supplied through the post, because the postage is saved, being a difference between eighteenpence per annum and half-a-crown in favour of the first method; and through the periodical dealer or newsvender, it comes unfolded and flat. It is proposed in future to print the Advertisements on the outside pages, similarly to the present number, which will tend to keep the interior pages free from dirt.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the "*Musical Times*."

MR. EDITOR,—As your columns are open to discuss any subject that may tend to improve class singing, I venture to ask for information relative to *solfaing* the scales, and naming the *tonic* or *key-note*. I have consulted several instruction books on the best method of teaching classes the first principles of singing: and in some of them the Editors recommend that all the scales should be practised in solfeggios corresponding with the scale of C major, (*i. e.*), commencing each scale with DO. And in treating of the various scales, they further recommend the practitioners to sing the same syllables to each scale. In one manual, that has a very considerable circulation in the national schools, the editor thus expresses himself:—"DO is always placed upon the key-note, whatever it may be, and then *mi fa*, and *si do*, will represent the intervals in which the semitones occur." Now, as the *solfaing* syllables are substituted for the letters C, D, E, F, G, A & B, how can it possibly agree with the rules of music, that we shall take DO invariably for the *key-note* to every scale? It is true, by so doing, we form the semitones in the major scales between the *third* and *fourth*, (*mi fa*), and the *seventh* and *eighth*, (*si do*), but surely the better and most proper way, is to take each of the syllables for its own respective scale,—DO, for the scale and key-note of C,—RE, for the scale and key-note of D, and so continued diatonically. The favour of a reply from some of your professional correspondents, will greatly oblige your obedient servant,

A Provincial Teacher.

[By reference to the application of the syllables Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si, Ut, by the inventor, Guido, it will be found that he used them as representing the intervals of

the scale without reference to pitch, the semitones always occurring between Mi and Fa, and the La and Si, or Si. We copy from a note, in "A Concise Explanation of the Gregorian Note, compiled from various authorities, by J. A. Novello," the origin of these syllables.—"The invention of lines and notes to express musical sounds, is attributed to Guido D'Arezzo, who was a Benedictine Monk in the monastery of Pomposa, near Ferrara. He had in charge the teaching of the boys to write and read music, and in order to make them remember the various sounds, he adapted to each note of the scale the first syllable of each line of the hymn of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist:—

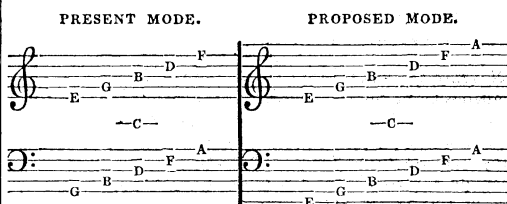
UT queant laxis
REsonare Fibris,
MIRA Gestorum,
FAMuli tuorum,
SOLve polluti
LA-bii Reatum.

SANCTE JOHANNES.

—Ed. M.T.]

To the Editor of the "*Musical Times*."

SIR,—I thought of addressing you last month upon the following subject, but hesitated, principally through fear lest the subject might have been discussed time back, and agreed upon as disadvantageous, and that there could not be any improvement on the old mode of writing music: but being entirely unaware that such has been the case, I have now resolved to submit the matter to your consideration, in order to ascertain the fact, as to my mind it is worth consideration. I am aware of the difficulty of interfering with old established customs, but the subject is so simple, (*viz.* that of making the Treble and Bass lines bear the same names, and not as now, totally different ones), that it would be an easy matter for professors to express their opinion whether it would be any improvement on the old plan. I would do it by adding a line to the top of the Treble staff, which would be A, the same as the top line in the Bass; and likewise adding another line to the bottom of the Bass staff, which would be E, the same as the bottom line in the Treble, thus:—



You will thus perceive that each of the lines bear the same name, thus making them much easier to read, particularly to the Pianist and Organist. Should you think the above remarks worthy a place in your Journal, by inserting them you would much oblige

A CONSTANT SUBSCRIBER.

Manchester April 12, 1848.

[Six-lined staves were partially used in the time of Blow, about 1680, but immediately discontinued. To us it appears very much harder to read music written on six lines instead of five, and if the gamut were properly learnt, (explained in No. 37 of the "*Musical Times*,"), as a scheme of eleven lines, in two groups of five each, with a ledger line between them, all difficulty would cease, and there would be rather an advantage in the Treble portion being named differently from the Bass portion. The adoption of a six-lined staff would render the whole of the written and printed music of the last four hundred years obsolete.—Ed. M.T.]